

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6496

To address the impending humanitarian crisis and potential security breakdown as a result of the mass influx of Iraqi refugees into neighboring countries, and the growing internally displaced population in Iraq, by increasing directed accountable assistance to these populations and their host countries, facilitating the resettlement of Iraqis at risk, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 15, 2008

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (for himself, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. OLVER, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, and Ms. WATERS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To address the impending humanitarian crisis and potential security breakdown as a result of the mass influx of Iraqi refugees into neighboring countries, and the growing internally displaced population in Iraq, by increasing directed accountable assistance to these populations and their host countries, facilitating the resettlement of Iraqis at risk, and for other purposes.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Iraqi Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement, and Security Act of 2008”.

8 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
9 this Act is as follows:

- 10 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

11 Congress finds the following:

(1) Since the beginning of the war in Iraq, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than 2,000,000 Iraqis have fled their homes for neighboring countries to avoid sectarian and other violence.

(2) According to the UNHCR, there are over 2,700,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) in

1 Iraq, many lacking adequate food, shelter, and other
2 basic services.

3 (3) The security situation in several locations
4 within Iraq reduces access to the Iraqi population by
5 Iraqi Government agencies and humanitarian aid
6 providers and greatly limits the provision of aid.

7 (4) The Iraq Study group predicted that “[a]
8 humanitarian catastrophe could follow as more refu-
9 gees are forced to relocate across the country and
10 the region.”.

11 (5) The dispersion of Iraqi refugees in poor
12 urban areas of host countries makes it exceedingly
13 difficult for humanitarian agencies to identify and
14 reach these populations.

15 (6) Many Iraqis have put their lives and those
16 of their families at risk by working for the United
17 States Government, United States corporations, the
18 United States media, and nongovernmental organi-
19 zations.

20 (7) Since March 2003, the United States has
21 resettled fewer than 8,000 Iraqi refugees, while Jor-
22 dan and Syria have provided temporary asylum to
23 2,000,000, and other countries neighboring Iraq
24 have received tens of thousands more.

1 (8) Since March 2003, Sweden has accepted
2 40,000 Iraqi refugees, and Denmark evacuated and
3 resettled 370 Iraqi interpreters and other Iraqis who
4 worked for Danish troops prior to the Danish con-
5 tingent's departure from Iraq last year.

6 (9) Current United States policies governing
7 the processing of refugees constrain United States
8 Government agencies from expediting the screening
9 processes and increasing the number of Iraqis ac-
10 cepted into the United States.

11 (10) The massive flow of Iraqi refugees into
12 neighboring host countries has overwhelmed existing
13 social, economic, and security capacities of such
14 countries.

15 (11) While Iraqi refugees and IDPs are dis-
16 proportionately made up of vulnerable populations,
17 many other segments of the Iraqi population at large
18 are also vulnerable.

19 (12) Increasing poverty and despair among dis-
20 placed populations may provide fertile ground for ex-
21 tremist ideologies to take root and possible recruit-
22 ment by extremist groups.

23 (13) The humanitarian crisis in Iraq and neigh-
24 boring countries threatens to destabilize the entire
25 region.

1 (14) United States policy is to admit at least
2 half of the refugees referred by the UNHCR. In
3 2007, the UNHCR referred more than 10,000 cases
4 to the United States, and the United States reset-
5 tled 1,608 Iraqi refugees. The United States has
6 pledged to admit 12,000 Iraqi refugees in 2008.

7 (15) In 2008, the Government of Iraq has dedi-
8 cated \$18 million to its Ministry of Displaced and
9 Immigration and offered \$25 million to neighboring
10 countries hosting Iraqi refugees, even as the Govern-
11 ment of Iraq is predicting it will likely generate
12 more than \$32 billion in oil revenues in 2008 alone.

13 (16) The United States has yet to disclose a
14 long-term comprehensive strategy to address this hu-
15 manitarian and security crisis.

16 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

17 It is the sense of Congress that—

18 (1) Iraqi refugees and IDPs will have an impact
19 on the security of the region and the short- and
20 long-term effects of their displacement must be con-
21 sidered within overall United States Iraq policy and
22 be addressed at the highest levels of Government;

23 (2) it is in the United States' humanitarian and
24 national interests to demonstrate its commitment to
25 resettle Iraqi refugees and IDPs and to work with

1 other governments, including the member states of
2 the Organization for Security and Cooperation in
3 Europe, to encourage them to do the same; and

4 (3) the United States should express its grati-
5 tude and support to host countries for providing hu-
6 manitarian assistance to Iraqi refugees, as well as to
7 those countries that have already resettled Iraqi ref-
8 ugees.

9 **SEC. 4. STATEMENTS OF POLICY.**

10 The following shall be the policies of the United
11 States:

12 (1) To lead an initiative to provide for the relief
13 of vulnerable populations in Iraq, including IDPs,
14 and Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries and to
15 take the lead in funding assistance requests from the
16 UNHCR, other humanitarian agencies, and inter-
17 national organizations by funding at levels well
18 above the traditional United States share, and to as-
19 sist in the resettlement of Iraqi refugees.

20 (2) To develop immediately a long-term com-
21 prehensive strategy for Iraq in coordination with the
22 Government of Iraq and host countries, the United
23 Nations, and nongovernmental organizations to meet
24 the humanitarian and security needs of Iraqi refu-
25 gees and IDPs and to establish within the Executive

1 Office of the President a Special Coordinator for
2 Iraqi Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons to
3 ensure expeditious and effective implementation of
4 such a strategy.

5 (3) To work with the Government of Iraq, the
6 United Nations, and nongovernmental organizations
7 to help the Government of Iraq improve its capacity
8 and ability to provide relief for IDPs and other vul-
9 nerable populations in all communities throughout
10 Iraq and to provide assistance to Iraqi refugees in
11 neighboring countries.

12 (4) To commit to working with international
13 partners, including the United Nations, donor coun-
14 tries, international financial institutions, inter-
15 national and indigenous nongovernmental organiza-
16 tions, and other international organizations to assist
17 in providing for the emergency, medium-, and long-
18 term humanitarian needs of vulnerable populations
19 in Iraq, including IDPs, and Iraqi refugees in neigh-
20 boring countries.

21 **SEC. 5. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR VULNERABLE**
22 **POPULATIONS IN IRAQ, IDPS, AND IRAQI REF-**
23 **UGEES.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—With respect to vulnerable popu-
25 lations in Iraq, including IDPs, and with respect to each

1 country containing a significant population of Iraqi refu-
2 gees, including Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt,
3 and Iran, the Secretary of State shall provide bilateral as-
4 sistance to such countries, as appropriate under United
5 States law, or funding to international organizations and
6 nongovernmental organizations in accordance with sub-
7 section (b) that are working in such countries, to provide
8 such refugees and IDPs with humanitarian assistance, in-
9 cluding adequate food, shelter, clean drinking water, sani-
10 tation, health care, education, and protection.

11 (b) ASSISTANCE AND FUNDING.—Assistance and
12 funding under subsection (a) shall be in the form of—

13 (1) contributions to the UNHCR that are not
14 less than 50 percent of the amount requested by the
15 UNHCR and other international organizations pro-
16 viding humanitarian assistance to vulnerable popu-
17 lations in Iraq, including IDPs, and to Iraqi refu-
18 gees in neighboring countries, for 2008, 2009, and
19 2010 for aid to Iraqi refugees and IDPs;

20 (2) contributions to the International Federa-
21 tion of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, other non-
22 governmental organizations, and other international
23 organizations working in such countries to provide
24 aid to vulnerable populations in Iraq, including

1 IDPs, and to Iraqi refugees in neighboring coun-
2 tries; and

3 (3) technical assistance to relevant ministries of
4 the Government of Iraq, contingent on substantially
5 increased Government of Iraq funding of assistance
6 programs for vulnerable populations in Iraq, includ-
7 ing IDPs, and for Iraqi refugees in neighboring
8 countries, together with appropriate monitoring
9 mechanisms.

10 (c) SPECIAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO VULNER-
11 ABLE POPULATIONS, IDPs, AND IRAQI REFUGEES.—The
12 Secretary of State shall make every effort to ensure that
13 the humanitarian needs of vulnerable populations in Iraq,
14 including IDPs, and Iraqi refugees in neighboring coun-
15 tries are met, including increased resources to improve the
16 registration capabilities of nongovernmental organizations
17 for such vulnerable populations, including IDPs, and such
18 refugees, adequate food, shelter, clean drinking water,
19 sanitation, health care, education, and protection.

20 (d) AUTHORIZATIONS OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be
22 appropriated \$700,000,000 for each of fiscal years
23 2009, 2010, and 2011 to carry out this section.
24 Amounts appropriated pursuant to this authoriza-

tion shall be in addition to amounts otherwise available for such purposes.

(2) FOR JORDAN.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to amounts authorized to be appropriated pursuant to subsection (d)(1), there is authorized to be appropriated \$500,000,000 for fiscal year 2009 to Jordan to provide humanitarian assistance to Iraqi refugees and to provide the necessary infrastructure to support both the needs of Iraqi refugees and the Jordanian people, such as for housing, educational facilities, health clinics, improved access to water resources and sanitation facilities and related social services.

(B) COOPERATION AND MONITORING.—In cooperation with the Government of Jordan, appropriate monitoring and transparency mechanisms shall be established to ensure that funds appropriated pursuant to subparagraph (A) are being effectively administered.

SEC. 6. IRAQI REFUGEE ADMISSIONS AND PROCESSING.

(a) NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—In addition to the numerical limitations provided for under subsections (a) and (b) of section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157), the number of refugees who may

1 be admitted during fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011
2 under subsection (c) of such section shall be increased by
3 not fewer than 20,000 for the purpose of admitting refu-
4 gees who—

5 (1) are citizens or nationals of Iraq; and

6 (2) became refugees on or after March 19,
7 2003.

8 (b) PROCESSING PERSONNEL INCREASE.—By not
9 later than September 30, 2009, the Secretary of State,
10 in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security,
11 shall, subject to the availability of appropriations for such
12 purpose, have increased by 100 percent the number of
13 Federal personnel in Iraq (and in other countries in the
14 region, where appropriate) who are conducting security re-
15 views of Iraqis who have applied for admission to the
16 United States as refugees above the number of such per-
17 sonnel conducting such reviews on the date of the enact-
18 ment of this Act.

19 (c) AUTHORIZATION.—There are authorized to be ap-
20 propriated to carry out this section such sums as may be
21 necessary for fiscal years 2009 through 2011.

22 **SEC. 7. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION.**

23 The Secretary of State, in cooperation with the Sec-
24 retary of Homeland Security, shall work with the inter-
25 national community, including the United Nations, the

1 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the
2 European Union, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab
3 League, the Organization of American States, the Associa-
4 tion of Southeast Asian Nations, and others to establish
5 mechanisms to provide—

6 (1) financial assistance to vulnerable popu-
7 lations in Iraq, including IDPs, and to Iraqi refu-
8 gees in neighboring countries through bilateral as-
9 sistance to host governments or through inter-
10 national organizations that are working directly with
11 such populations, including IDPs, and such refugees;

12 (2) technical and financial assistance to inter-
13 national organizations in order to process refugees;
14 and

15 (3) increased attention to and advocacy on be-
16 half of vulnerable populations in Iraq, including
17 IDPs, and Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries by
18 continuing to strongly support the work of United
19 Nations agencies and international organizations
20 providing protection and assistance.

21 **SEC. 8. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

22 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
23 ment of this Act and every six months thereafter, the Sec-
24 retary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security
25 shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the

1 House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign
2 Relations of the Senate a report regarding implementation
3 of this Act, including—

4 (1) information concerning assistance and fund-
5 ing to host countries and international organizations
6 and nongovernmental organizations pursuant to sec-
7 tion 5, and accountability reports regarding how
8 such funds are being expended;

9 (2) information concerning measures taken by
10 the United States to increase its capabilities to proc-
11 ess Iraqi IDPs and refugees for resettlement and the
12 number of those IDPs and refugees resettled under
13 section 6;

14 (3) an evaluation of the effectiveness of meas-
15 ures implemented by agencies of the Government of
16 Iraq to provide direct assistance to vulnerable popu-
17 lations in Iraq, including IDPs, and Iraqi refugees
18 in neighboring countries; and

19 (4) information concerning progress on the im-
20 plementation of the long-term comprehensive strat-
21 egy described in section 4(2).

22 **SEC. 9. VULNERABLE POPULATIONS IN IRAQ DEFINED.**

23 In this Act, the term “vulnerable populations in Iraq”
24 includes Iraqis from ethnically mixed families, women at
25 risk, unaccompanied children and adolescents, the elderly,

1 Iraqis with serious medical needs, survivors of violence or
2 torture, Iraqis who are members of religious or other mi-
3 nority groups, including Chaldo Assyrian Christians,
4 Sabian Mandaens, Yazidis, Jews, and Baha'is, and any
5 other group determined to vulnerable by the Secretary of
6 State in consultation with the UNHCR.

○